

Supplementary files

Cat owners' perception on having a pet cat during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Supplementary file 1. Survey

1. In which country were you living during the pandemic? [text box or country choice]

2. How many cats do you have? Tick the number of cats per age category

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Kitten (< 6 months of age)						
Adult (6 months – 12 years of age)						
Old (> 12 years of age)						

3. What is the breed? If you have more than one cat then list the breeds of all cats [text box]

4. When did the most recent cat arrive at your household, counting from the start of the pandemic?

- ☐ Less than a month before the pandemic
- ☐ Less than 6 months before the pandemic
- ☐ 6 – 12 months before the pandemic
- ☐ More than a year before the pandemic

5. During the pandemic, where did the cat(s) mostly stay?

- ☐ Outdoors
- ☐ Indoor, but not on places usually occupied by humans (bed, armchair etc.)
- ☐ Indoor, including on places usually occupied by humans

6. How frequent was the physical contact with the cat(s) during the pandemic?

- ☐ Only minimal touching, stroking or petting
- ☐ 1-2 times a day briefly touching, stroking or petting
- ☐ Multiple times a day touching, stroking or petting

7. Did the care of the cat(s) change during the pandemic?

- ☐ No, care remained as usual
- ☐ Yes, friends, relatives or neighbours took care of one or more of the cats
- ☐ Yes, the cat(s) went to a shelter / animal hotel

8. If yes, what was the reason for changing care?

- ☐ Fear of being infected with COVID-19
- ☐ Difficulties with life organization due to restrictions during the pandemic
- ☐ Financial difficulties due to the pandemic
- ☐ Other

9. Did you take any special measures or actions with respect to your cat(s) in order to prevent spreading of COVID-19? Multiple answers possible.

- ☐ No
- ☐ Decreasing physical contact with the cat(s) compared to before
- ☐ Letting the cat(s) less frequently outdoors
- ☐ No more outdoor access beyond the boundaries of the house / garden
- ☐ Disinfection of paws/coat
- ☐ Avoiding the cat(s) to contact other people
- ☐ Avoiding of close contact with other animals
- ☐ Leaving of your cat(s) temporarily under custody of other people
- ☐ Giving up the cat(s) forever
- ☐ Other

10. Did you observe any changes in the behaviour of your cat(s) during the pandemic as compared to before the pandemic? *Exclude normal behavioural changes related to the season.* Multiple answers possible.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> No change | <input type="radio"/> Incontinence / urinating or defecating indoors, outside the litter box |
| <input type="radio"/> Calmer | |
| <input type="radio"/> Anxiety | <input type="radio"/> More frequent meowing/vocalizations |
| <input type="radio"/> Apathy | <input type="radio"/> Less frequent meowing/vocalizations |
| <input type="radio"/> Avoiding a close contact to caretaker (e.g. hiding) | <input type="radio"/> More frequent requests for going outdoors |
| <input type="radio"/> More frequent seeking close contacts (approaching, allowing petting etc.) | <input type="radio"/> Reluctance of being let outdoors |
| <input type="radio"/> Development or increase of repetitive (stereotypic) behaviour | <input type="radio"/> More playful |
| <input type="radio"/> Increased aggression towards humans | <input type="radio"/> Less playful |
| <input type="radio"/> Increased damaging behaviour (e.g. scratching door) | <input type="radio"/> Restlessness |
| | <input type="radio"/> Other behavioural changes |

11. Did you observe any changes in the health of your cat(s) during the pandemic as compared to before the pandemic? Multiple answers possible.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> No change | <input type="radio"/> Decreased appetite |
| <input type="radio"/> Constipation | <input type="radio"/> Increased appetite |
| <input type="radio"/> Diarrhoea | <input type="radio"/> Skin problems |
| <input type="radio"/> Decreased mobility | <input type="radio"/> Other |

12. Does your cat suffer from any chronic disease?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, skin/parasitic diseases | <input type="radio"/> Yes, other chronic disease |
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, internal diseases | <input type="radio"/> No |

13. Which difficulties did you experience of keeping a cat during the pandemic?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> No difficulties | <input type="radio"/> Food supply |
| <input type="radio"/> Fear of being infected with COVID-19 because of reasons related to the cat | <input type="radio"/> More difficult access to veterinary care |

- Unfavourable changes in cat's behaviour
- Other difficulties

14. Did you see any advantages of the presence of a cat during the pandemic?

- Yes, reduction of own psychological tensions because of contact with cat(s)
- Yes, desirable changes in cat's behaviour
- Other advantages
- No advantages

15. What best describes where you lived most of the time during the pandemic? Tick all that apply.

- Densely populated city / capital city
- Regular city
- Suburb/small town
- Country side
- Flat without yard/garden
- House/apartment with small yard/garden
- House/farm with big yard/garden

16. How many adult persons were staying at the house during the pandemic? [text box]

17. Did you have to take care of children during the pandemic?

- Yes, one or more infants of < 1 years old
- Yes, one or more children of 1 – 5 years old
- Yes, one or more children of 5 – 15 years old
- No

18. For how long have you been restricted in going outside (lock-down)? Tick what best applies.

- Not at all
- 2 weeks
- 1 month
- 2 months
- 3 months
- More than 3 months

19. Have you or anyone in your household been under quarantine?

- Yes, for 2 weeks
- Yes, for more than 2 weeks
- No
- Prefer not to disclose

20. What is your gender?

- Man
- Woman
- Prefer not to disclose

21. What is your year of birth? [text box]